1: Turnbull E-4. 8 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

larly a child, who is said always to respect his patrilineal totem, respects his mother's totem when living with her group. A man also observes the totemic restrictions of his *karé*-brother. The totem is always taboo for the Mbuti. One may never eat it, and often not kill it, touch it, or even eat the food normally eaten by the totemic species. Breach of taboo is believed to involve serious illness or death.

The relationship of the Mbuti to their totem is one not of fear but rather of respect, which Schebesta says is evidenced by their addressing it as "father" or "grandfather," and by the belief that the totem animal gave birth to the first member of the lineal group observing that totem.

To this belief that the clan ancestor descended from the totem is allied the belief that on death the Mbuti is transformed into his totem. Schebesta finds it difficult to reconcile this with his analysis of Mbuti religion, and to see just which vital principle it is that becomes the totem. Connected with this difficulty is the all-important belief in *megbe*, the vital force emanating from the totem and immanent, but in different degrees, in all human beings.

Schebesta cites no individual or sex totems. As he sees it, totemism follows strictly lineage lines.

Magic

Schebesta finds the link between the religious
[p. 192-B]

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Kengé called out loudly that the only kind of person who would do that was one whose mother's private parts were smelly.

Matungi leapt into the center of the camp and challenged Kengé to a fight. Kengé refused, until called a coward. He and Matungi then each raised one foot against the other, and grappled. At this point the older men intervened and pulled them apart. By then it was time to go hunting, and the incident was forgotten.

14. Two of the most popular people in the band were Moké and Mayuma. The one was a widower, the other a widow. Mayuma wanted desperately to marry Moké, and as fond as he was of her, he equally desperately wanted to remain single. He had reared one family, he said, and had grandchildren, and that was enough. He wanted quiet, and women were noise.

But everyone else thought it would be a good match, and they plotted to help Mayuma. They tried to shame Moké into sleeping with her, at least, by getting her to ask him publicly to do just that. Moké refused.

Shortly afterward Mayuma became ill, and Moké was blamed. It was recalled by Mayuma's kin that after her husband had died, Moké had slept with her and offered her marriage. Now his refusal to fulfill that promise had brought about her illness.

Moké sat and listened, then restated his reasons for not wanting to marry Mayuma, but said that nonetheless he was very fond of her and would help to feed her and make her well. This was accepted, but it was still considered that thwarted love is a very bad thing, and nobody should deliberately mislead another in such matters.

15. Sexual relations between unmarried youngsters are countenanced happily unless they approach the rather hazy realm of incest, or unless they create a disturbance. Parents were constantly complaining of the noise their children made while engaged upon amorous expeditions; they preferred being able to turn a deaf ear. One youth went too far when he called out from inside his girl friend's hut to the group outside (which included her parents), and begged them to continue singing because "it is so sweet to [make love] to song, just like in the *elima* hut." His phrase for lovemaking was somewhat intimately descriptive, and brought cries of protest and his immediate ejection from the hut.

There are numerous other examples where parents become enraged simply at having their attention forced. Manyalibo's daughter, Mebapepé, was courted by all and sundry, and it was not this that

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34. During a hunt Ekianga's unmarried niece, Ekimanji, had charge of his two spears and lost these together with her own basket, full of meat. Her story was that she was standing about, waiting for the rest to join up after a beat, when she had to answer a call of nature. She went a few yards away, and on return found the two spears and the basket gone. She called out, and Masalito, who was nearby, came running over. She asked him to stand there while she went and searched, which she did. She could find no traces. He also searched, and neither could he. It then began to rain and they returned to camp.

The next day the hunt went back to the spot and searched all over but found nothing. They even repeated the hunt in the same spot, casting the nets and beating toward them. Nobody offered any suggestions as to what could have happened, other than that they must have been taken. Not a single individual was hinted at directly or indirectly. One of the hunters suggested it was a villager, for Mbuti don't steal, but everyone knew that no villager was anywhere about in the forest during the hunt. However, the explanation, weak as it was, was better than none and, if not accepted, it was certainly not denied. The matter was not mentioned again.

DISPUTES CONCERNING THE VILLAGE

35. It might be thought that the village would be a common source of dispute. Far from being so, the village most frequently occurs in disputes as above, as a means of ending a dispute without settling the blame on any Mbuti and thus hastening the process of fission. Even money is assimilated into the forest pattern of distribution of food, insofar as it is ever brought into the forest (see 29, above). The only real dispute over money in my records was because the money was received for a spear which had been stolen from one villager and sold back to another, and it was difficult to assess the correct apportionment of the "game" (a hundred francs) between the "hunters."

The village, however, was often being blamed for ill health, and with frequent justification, for sanitation, which was no problem for the Mbuti in the forest, was a major one in the village. The village also frequently took the blame for poor hunting, particularly if some individual or some group in the band (e.g., the women who did not beat) seemed to be genuinely to blame.

One dispute of major proportions, and one of the few which occasioned direct action, did, however, have its cause in the village. The

3t Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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763
761 of him. She pointed her skinny hand at him, flinging her arm back-
152 ward and forward with every step, rhythmically enumerating all the
578 reasons why he should keep his mouth shut. He was a great one at complaining about other people being trouble-makers, but he made more noise than anyone. Besides, one should never say that anyone had died completely unless they had died for ever.

Madyadya, Manyalibo's adopted son, lazily wandered in between them and spitting on the ground said that Asofalinda made a pretty good noise herself. Old Moke laughed noiselessly. Asofalinda strode back to her house and slammed the fine wooden door; Mambunia continued to grumble to himself for a few minutes, and Masisi asked who was going to give him some tobacco.

761 It seemed that the girl was very ill with dysentery but was not
763 yet dead. The Pygmies express various degrees of illness by saying
• 953 that someone is hot, with fever, ill, dead, completely or absolutely dead, and, finally, dead for ever.

763 Unhappily, early the next morning loud wailing from Cephu's
152 camp, a quarter of a mile away, told us that the little girl was now dead for ever. When someone is ill the women relatives will wail, but it is a formal act, perhaps copied from the Negroes for whom it is an obligation. But when someone really dies, for ever, there is among the Pygmies a burst of uncontrollable grief, not only from relatives, but from friends. Even men will weep if they have been close to the dead person. It is a very different sound, and a terrible one, and that is what we heard shortly after dawn.

764 The funeral took place the same day, directed by the Negroes.
[123] I helped with the digging of the grave, but Kenge, Kelemoke, Amabosu, and Masisi's eldest son Agerongo were the chief diggers.
[179] The Negroes lent the tools and stood there, giving instructions, and they became impatient and angry when we stopped and climbed out of the grave for a smoke. The young Pygmies laughed and joked, and

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684 835 [152] their attention to our tree and began to threaten us. They called us all manner of names, and then they fell on the ground and rolled over and over, beating themselves, tearing their hair, and wailing loudly.

Just then there came more shouts from two directions. One set was from the youths who had evidently found Kelemoke hiding just outside the camp. At this the girls leaped up and, brandishing their knives, set off to join the pursuit. The other shouts, for the first time from adult men and women, came from the camp of Cephu. I could not make out what they were about, but I could see the glow of flames.

I asked Kenge what had happened. He looked very grave now and said that it was the greatest shame that could befall a Pygmy—Kelemoke had committed incest. In some African tribes it is actually preferred that cousins should marry each other, but among the Ba-Mbuti this was considered almost as incestuous as sleeping with a brother or sister. I asked Kenge if they would kill Kelemoke if they found him, but Kenge said they would not find him.

684 835 627 [153] "He has been driven to the forest," he said, "and he will have to live there alone. Nobody will accept him into their group after what he has done. And he will die, because one cannot live alone in the forest. The forest will kill him. And if it does not kill him he will die of leprosy." Then, in typical Pygmy fashion, he burst into smothered laughter, clapped his hands and said, "He has been doing it for months; he must have been very stupid to let himself be caught. No wonder they chased him into the forest." To Kenge, evidently, the greater crime was Kelemoke's stupidity in being found out.

All the doors to the huts still remained tight shut. Njobo and Moke had both been called on by the youths to show themselves and settle the matter, but they had both refused to leave their huts, leaving Kelemoke to his fate. Now there was an even greater uproar over in Cephu's camp, and Kenge and I decided to climb down from the tree and see what was going on.

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Not long afterward Aberi became ill. He was so ill that he could not leave the initiation camp, and he slept on the wooden initiation bed beside the boys, moaning and tossing in his fever. When he recovered he said that he had been bewitched, that the villagers were trying to kill him. He even attacked his brother Masalito for having broken just about every rule in the book.

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The Pygmies practice no sorcery or witchcraft, but they know it is rife among their neighbors and they have seen enough of it in action to be uneasy about it. Aberi was one of the few who really believed in it, and who knew what real fear was. He knew fear not only of being bewitched, but of being accused of witchcraft; for his wife, Tamasa, the kindly woman disfigured with yaws, was frequently accused by the villagers. The villagers felt that anyone cursed with such a dreadful deformity must be evil. On several occasions I heard Pygmies accuse old Sau, the mother of Amabosu the young singer, of being a witch. But although they used the village word, it had a different meaning. They were merely accusing her of making trouble. They sometimes said the same thing of other old people who were, as old Pygmies often are, strong-minded and obstinate.

The villagers, however, believe that one can be possessed of a substance which gives one supernatural powers and compels the use of them to harm others. Sometimes it works in such a way that the witch may not even be aware of what he or she is doing, and various forms of divination are used to test suspects. The only time the Pygmies think seriously about witchcraft is when they are in the village, or when villagers visit them in the forest. A single villager visiting a forest hunting camp can bring his evil with him, but when he departs it departs with him.

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It was curious that Aberi, the one who feared this evil most, should apparently die by it. He used to tell a story of how one night in the village he had been going to the latrine when he was caught from behind, as if by a hand clutching at his shoulder. But there was